

Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service (ICVS)
Quarterly Report:
January 1 – March 31, 2013

DISASTER

The Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service deployed 17 members to New York to provide disaster response for Hurricane Sandy. This is a continuation of services that were provided in 2012 immediately following the storm. Through the Disaster Response Cooperative Agreement the ICVS was able to send additional teams to continue needed work on the east coast. AmeriCorps members served a total of 44 days providing 1251 hours of service. The activities that were conducted included over 30,000 wellness checks to homeowners and homebound seniors. AmeriCorps members along with National Guard provided door-to-door checks in Brooklyn, Coney Island, Staten Island, Queens and the Far Rockaway's. Additionally, members worked in the field mucking and gutting homes, providing mold remediation and scouted homes for damage. Members worked with homeowners to determine assistance needed and connected them to the appropriate resources for recovery.

AMERICORPS

Fourteen applications were received requesting a total of \$4,367,936 in federal funding to operate AmeriCorps programs in Iowa. We expect to receive notification in late May or early June from our federal agency, the Corporation for National and Community Service, related to grants that are selected for national-level competitive funding. The ICVS will be making decisions on state-level formula funding awards later this spring for programs that will begin September 1, 2013.

PROMOTION AND RECOGNITION

Excellence in Mentoring Awards – a special ceremony was held in the Capitol on January 17 to recognize the 2013 recipients of this award:

- Tom Dickerson, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Siouxland, Sioux City
- Debbie Fuller, Big Brothers Big Sisters of East Central Iowa, Cedar Rapids
- Patrick Kremer, Heart of Iowa Big Brothers Big Sisters, Marshalltown
- Stephen Milder, Siblings by Choice, Maynard
- Lowell Tesch, Bridges Mentoring Program, Osage

Any mentor who has been mentoring for at least two years with an Iowa certified mentoring program in good standing is eligible to be nominated for this honor. In its fifth year, the Excellence in Mentoring Award serves as the most prestigious state-level honor mentors in our state can receive. The individuals who will receive the award this afternoon have made significant differences in the lives of children and youth through mentoring; and have freely devoted their time and talents toward investing in the futures of our youngest Iowans.

Days of Service – MLK Day is an annual day of service with the motto "Make it Day ON not a Day OFF". For the January 21, 2013 MLK Day, the ICVS working with its partners, the Corporation for National and Community Service, volunteer centers and AmeriCorps programs across the state engaged hundreds of volunteers in over a dozen service

projects. Volunteers across Iowa and the nation delivered meals, refurbished homes and schools, collected food and clothing, signed up mentors, promoted nonviolence, supported veterans and military families, and much more to celebrate Dr. King's message of unity and hope. New this year was a partnership with the Iowa branch of the Presidential Inauguration Committee who temporarily set up shop within the ICVS office to connect volunteers to service events and projects on and around January 19 and 21, which were the dates of the official MLK Holiday and National Day of Service.

Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame – Four individuals and one group were honored during a special induction ceremony held in the Capitol on February 19 as part of Volunteer Awareness Day activities. Several Iowa legislators were in attendance as well as members of Iowa's Congressional delegation. Congressman Bruce Braley attended the ceremony and helped honor the inductees. Also attending and making remarks were staff members from Senators Grassley and Harkin's offices, and Congressman King and Latham's offices. Congressman Loeb sack was unable to send a representative, but sent a personal letter of congratulations to the honoree from his district. 2013 Inductees:

Organization/Nonprofit Category (not-for-profit organization providing voluntary service to others):

- The Junior League of Des Moines

Individual Category (one person providing outstanding volunteer service to benefit others):

- Richard Hettinger, DDS of Sioux City
- Myron (Mike) Wilson of Cedar Rapids
- Leo Chisholm of Osage
- Shirley Kessel of Lamoni

Governor's Volunteer Awards – 2013 nomination forms were released in early March. Six regional recognition ceremonies will be held in June in Ottumwa, Pleasant Hill, Storm Lake, Council Bluffs, Marion, and Cedar Falls.

TRAINING

Volunteer Awareness Day – A webinar was held Jan. 29 for organizations planning to participate in this event. Best practices for communicating with elected officials were shared as well as an overview of the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service, its new Public Policy Committee, and the commission's 2013 legislative priorities.

Governor's Volunteer Awards – Training for agency nomination coordinators was held Feb. 28. The agency coordinators are responsible for disseminating information about the program and for collecting and approving nominations. Twenty-four state government agencies are participating in the program this year, as well as the Iowa League of Cities, and the Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center.

Disability Inclusion – For the 6th consecutive year, ICVS hosted a disability inclusion mini-conference in order to educate the local community about volunteering and

national service opportunities for people with disabilities and their network of providers. This year's training was held in Omaha, Nebraska in partnership with Serve Nebraska. 120 people attended including the First Lady of Nebraska, Sally Ganem, who offered opening remarks. Topics included: legalities of working with volunteers, replicating national service programs that intentionally recruit people with disabilities and/or Veterans, assistance technology for increased independence, and planning for SSI/SSDI benefits.

Iowa Mentoring Partnership – Spring Training was held on April 4, 2013 in Altoona. 46 Certified Mentoring Program Staff, AmeriCorps members, and new mentoring program staff attended the training. This year's training was designed as a mini-conference, with two available tracks of learning related to internal and external program development. Specific topics included: working with noncompliant children, navigating tough conversations, and working with LGBTQ youth (internal); fundraising, corporate partnerships, and utilizing national service (external).

OUTREACH EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

What's Your 50? Campaign – last fall Governor Branstad and Lt. Governor Reynolds issued a challenge to all Iowans to volunteer at least 50 hours each year. As part of this Call to Service, the What's Your 50? campaign has attracted the attention of a computer science class at Iowa State University; a team of students have volunteered to design and implement an online tool as their class project. The tool will help expand the reach and impact of the Call to Service by encouraging volunteers to post their service hours and compare them with other volunteers across the state.

Also in conjunction with this campaign, ICVS posts a volunteer spotlight every week on www.facebook.com/volunteeriowa. This series is called the 50 Faces of Volunteerism. To date, 24 volunteers (individuals, couples, and groups) have been featured, and 8 more have received a nomination for posting. These volunteers represent 19 counties thus far.

National Mentoring Month

- *Mentoring Day on the Hill* was held in the Capitol on January 17. This event is held every January in recognition of National Mentoring Month, and provides an essential opportunity for certified mentoring programs to advocate for mentoring in Iowa and to educate local legislators on the impact of mentoring in local communities. 20 programs were in attendance on this day. The Excellence in Mentoring Awards were presented as a part of this annual advocacy and recognition event.
- *Governor's Proclamation* – Governor Branstad and Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds signed a Proclamation for Mentoring Month in Iowa in the company of local mentoring program staff and volunteers on January 3, 2013.
- *National Mentoring Summit* – Iowa Mentoring Partnership (IMP) were honored with an invitation to present at the National Mentoring Summit, the culminating event for National Mentoring Month. The Summit took place in Washington, D.C. on January 24 and 25. IMP staff facilitated a session in partnership with Nebraska

TeamMates and Kansas Mentors. This cohort presented their model for the Coaches Mentoring Challenge, a promotional campaign that attempts to raise awareness of mentoring opportunities and recruit more mentors—especially men—in tandem with the competitive spirit of the college football season.

Volunteer Awareness Day – The 8th annual event was held in the Capitol Rotunda on Feb. 19. More than 20 exhibitors participated in this opportunity to share news about the impact of local volunteers with legislators.

AmeriCorps Week – was held March 9-17. Each year during AmeriCorps Week, the commitment of AmeriCorps members and alums is recognized by highlighting the extraordinary impact AmeriCorps makes across our nation every day. The main goal of AmeriCorps Week 2013 was to share our AmeriCorps stories and how “AmeriCorps Works” in our communities and state. AmeriCorps Week is also meant to connect AmeriCorps members and alums with each other so they feel they are a part of a nationwide effort and communicate AmeriCorps’ powerful impact on critical problems and on the lives of its members and alums. Governor Branstad signed an official AmeriCorps Week proclamation in his formal office on March 14 with numerous AmeriCorps members, alumni, and program staff in attendance. The National Service projects in the state engaged over 600 individuals in their AmeriCorps Week events, including some local and statewide “VIP” guests. The events and projects ranged from serving youth at a school or afterschool program to serving lunch at a homeless shelter to networking and celebrating member and alum successes together.

Public Policy Committee – this newly formed sub-committee has been charged with guiding the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service’s development and advocacy of public policy at the state and federal level designed to increase opportunities to serve and remove barriers for engagement for organizations.

Governor’s Conference on LGBTQ Youth – ICVS participated in this event on April 3, which was organized by Iowa Safe Schools to engage and educate the public on issues relevant to the LGBTQ community and to promote diversity and equality. ICVS attended the event to promote AmeriCorps and volunteering.

The Simpson College Fair was focused on recruiting upcoming Spring graduates from Simpson. At the fair we were provided a booth with about 30 other organizations and we passed out information about AmeriCorps VISTA, NCCC, and AmeriCorps State and National programs. We spoke to some undergrads about the possibility of participating in summer associate positions that would allow them to gain experience earn and earn funds for college. Approximately 50 students stopped at our booth during this three-hour event.

RESULTS

Volunteer Generation Fund – In Iowa, volunteer management infrastructure is critical in engaging community members in meaningful volunteer service. Iowa consistently ranks among the top three states in volunteering, which is no doubt a testament to the success and dedication of the Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) grantees. The VGF was established through the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act and Iowa was one of the first states to receive a grant to build the capacity of our volunteer infrastructure. Over the last year, the VGF grantees were able to leverage over 40,000 volunteers serving Iowa's charitable sector.

The following agencies are recipients of VGF grants through the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service: City of Davenport – Davenport Volunteer Connection; Graceland University – Volunteer Center of Southern Iowa; Center for Siouxland – Siouxland Volunteer Center; United Way of Wapello County – Volunteer Center; United Way of Johnson County – Johnson County Volunteer Center; United Way of East Central Iowa – Volunteer Center; Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley; Fairfield Volunteer Center; and, United Way of the Big River Region – City of Dubuque.

RSVP – During calendar year 2012, RSVP programs across the state placed 5,001 volunteers to meet needs in 8 focus areas, serving 455,517 hours in a variety of assignments.

ICVS AmeriCorps VISTA Team – The next recruitment cycle is underway and we have been given 16 slots again for the 2013-2014 cycle. We have approved 10 host sites for the summer recruitment cycle; two of them are brand new to the ICVS VISTA Program.

Volunteer Solutions – the ICVS manages this state-wide online web portal which uses the latest technology to connect volunteers with opportunities to serve. The commission hosts 15 subsites, which all feed information into www.volunteeriowa.org, so potential volunteers have a “one-stop-shop” to locate ways to give back. Currently, more than 1,000 agencies have approximately 1,200 opportunities posted online, and nearly 25,000 volunteers have registered for an account so they can easily save their favorite agencies, share their opinions about an organization, and can offer their services in times of disaster.

State Service Plan – the commission is required to develop an overall plan for service every three years. The most recent plan, which covers 2013–2016 was sent to Governor Branstad for review and approval in January. Once approved, this plan will guide the work of the ICVS and our partners in their work to use volunteers and national service members to address some of Iowa's most pressing needs.